

### **Listing of the Claims**

Claims 1-12. (Canceled)

Claim 13. (Withdrawn) A method for whitening the teeth of a subject comprising the steps of sequentially

applying to the teeth a composition having a pH of between about 7 and about 10 and comprising an alkalizing agent, and

contacting the teeth with a mixture comprising a hydrogen peroxide precursor compound in an amount effective to whiten teeth.

Claim 14. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 13 wherein the alkalizing agent is selected from the group consisting of potassium phosphate, sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, ammonium hydroxide, sodium carbonate, ammonium carbonate, potassium carbonate, TRIS and triethanolamine.

Claim 15. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 13 wherein the composition is a rinse, paste or gel.

Claim 16. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 13 wherein the composition is buffered in a manner to maintain tooth surface pH between about 7 and about 10.

Claim 17. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 13 wherein tooth surface pH is maintained at a pH of between about 7 and about 10.

Claim 18. (Currently Amended) A method for whitening the teeth of a subject comprising the steps of sequentially

applying to the teeth a composition having a pH of between about 7 and about 10 and comprising an alkalizing agent, and

contacting the teeth with a mixture comprising hydrogen peroxide in an amount effective to whiten teeth[[]], wherein the teeth are in contact with the whitening mixture for a time range of between about 15 and about 30 minutes.

Claim 19. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 18 wherein the alkalizing agent is selected from the group consisting of potassium phosphate, sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, ammonium hydroxide, sodium carbonate, ammonium carbonate, potassium carbonate, TRIS and triethanolamine.

Claim 20. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 18 wherein the composition is a rinse, paste or gel.

Claim 21. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 18 wherein the composition is buffered in a manner to maintain tooth surface pH between about 7 and about 10.

Claim 22. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 18 wherein tooth surface pH is maintained at a pH of between about 7 and about 10.

Claim 23. (Currently Amended) A method for whitening teeth of a subject comprising the steps of sequentially

Raising the tooth surface pH to between about 7 and about 10, and

contacting the tooth surface with a peroxide-containing or peroxide releasing tooth bleaching composition[[]], wherein the teeth are in contact with the tooth bleaching composition for a time range of between about 15 and about 30 minutes.

Claim 24. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 23 wherein the step of raising tooth surface pH includes applying to the teeth a first composition comprising an alkalizing agent having a pH of between about 7 and about 10.

Claim 25. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 24 wherein the alkalizing agent is selected from the group consisting of potassium phosphate, sodium hydroxide, potassium

hydroxide, ammonium hydroxide, sodium carbonate, ammonium carbonate, potassium carbonate, TRIS and triethanolamine.

Claim 26. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 24 wherein the first composition is a rinse, paste or gel.

Claim 27. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 24 wherein the first composition is buffered in a manner to maintain tooth surface pH at between about 7 and about 10.

Claim 28. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 23 wherein the tooth surface pH is maintained at a pH of between about 7 and about 10.

Claim 29. (Currently Amended) A method for whitening teeth of a subject comprising the steps of sequentially

applying to the teeth a composition capable of buffering the tooth surface pH at between about 7 and about 10, and

contacting the teeth with a mixture comprising a hydrogen peroxide precursor compound or hydrogen peroxide in an amount effective to whiten teeth[[]], wherein the teeth are in contact with the whitening mixture for a time range of between about 15 and about 30 minutes.

Claim 30. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 29 wherein the composition capable of buffering tooth surface pH includes a member selected from the group consisting of potassium phosphate, sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, ammonium hydroxide, sodium carbonate, ammonium carbonate, potassium carbonate, TRIS and triethanolamine.

Claim 31. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 29 wherein the composition is a rinse, paste or gel.

Claim 32. (Currently Amended) A method for whitening the teeth of a subject comprising the steps of sequentially

buffering the tooth surface pH at between about 7 and about 10, and

contacting the teeth with a mixture comprising a hydrogen peroxide precursor compound or hydrogen peroxide in an amount effective to whiten teeth[[.]],wherein the teeth are in contact with the whitening mixture for a time range of between about 15 and about 30 minutes.

Claim 33. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 32 wherein the step of buffering includes applying to the tooth surface a composition comprising a member selected from the group consisting of potassium phosphate, sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, ammonium hydroxide, sodium carbonate, ammonium carbonate, potassium carbonate, TRIS and triethanolamine.

Claim 34. (Currently amended) The method of claim 33 wherein the composition is a rinse, paste or gel.

Claim 35. (Currently Amended) A method for whitening the teeth of a subject comprising the steps of sequentially

maintaining the tooth surface pH at between about 7 and about 10, and

contacting the teeth with a mixture comprising a hydrogen peroxide precursor compound or hydrogen peroxide in an amount effective to whiten teeth[[.]], wherein the teeth are in contact with the whitening mixture for a time range of between about 15 and about 30 minutes.

Claim 36. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 35 wherein the step of maintaining includes applying a composition including a member selected from the group consisting of potassium phosphate, sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, ammonium hydroxide, sodium carbonate, ammonium carbonate, potassium carbonate, TRIS and triethanolamine.

Claim 37. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 36 wherein the composition is a rinse, paste or gel.

Claim 38. (Withdrawn) A method for whitening teeth of a subject comprising the steps of sequentially

applying to the teeth a composition comprising an alkalizing agent, and

contacting the teeth with a mixture comprising a hydrogen peroxide precursor compound in an amount effective to whiten teeth,

wherein the pH at the tooth surface is between about 7 and about 10.

Claim 39. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 38 wherein the alkalizing agent is selected from the group consisting of potassium phosphate, sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, ammonium hydroxide, sodium carbonate, ammonium carbonate, potassium carbonate, TRIS and triethanolamine.

Claim 40. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 38 wherein the composition is a rinse, paste or gel.

Claim 41. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 38 wherein the composition is buffered in a manner to maintain tooth surface pH between about 7 and about 10.

Claim 42. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 38 wherein tooth surface pH is maintained during tooth whitening at a pH of between about 7 and about 10.

Claims 43-48. (Canceled)

Claim 49. (Withdrawn) A method for whitening the teeth of a subject comprising the steps of sequentially

applying to the teeth a composition comprising an alkalizing agent having a pH of between about 7 and about 10, and

contacting the teeth with a mixture comprising a hydrogen peroxide precursor compound in an amount effective to whiten teeth.

Claim 50. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 49 wherein the alkalizing agent is selected from the group consisting of potassium phosphate, sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, ammonium hydroxide, sodium carbonate, ammonium carbonate, potassium carbonate, TRIS and triethanolamine.

Claim 51. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 49 wherein the composition is a rinse, paste or gel.

Claim 52. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 49 wherein the composition is buffered in a manner to maintain tooth surface pH between about 7 and about 10.

Claim 53. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 49 wherein tooth surface pH is maintained at a pH of between about 7 and about 10.

Claim 54. (Currently Amended) A method for whitening the teeth of a subject comprising the steps of sequentially

applying to the teeth a composition comprising an alkalizing agent having a pH of between about 7 and about 10, and

contacting the teeth with a mixture comprising hydrogen peroxide in an amount effective to whiten teeth[[]],wherein the teeth are in contact with the whitening mixture for a time range of between about 15 and about 30 minutes.

Claim 55. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 54 wherein the alkalizing agent is selected from the group consisting of potassium phosphate, sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, ammonium hydroxide, sodium carbonate, ammonium carbonate, potassium carbonate, TRIS and triethanolamine.

Claim 56. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 54 wherein the composition is a rinse, paste or gel.

Claim 57. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 54 wherein the composition is buffered in a manner to maintain tooth surface pH at between about 7 and about 10.

Claim 58. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 54 wherein tooth surface pH is maintained at a pH of between about 7 and about 10.

Claim 59. (Currently amended) The method of claim 24 wherein the first composition comprising an alkalizing agent is a rinse, paste or gel.

Claim 60. (Currently amended) The method of claim 24 wherein the first composition comprising an alkalizing agent is buffered in a manner to maintain tooth surface pH at between about 7 and about 10.

Claim 61. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 24 wherein tooth surface pH is maintained at a pH of between about 7 and about 10.

Claim 62. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 33 wherein the composition comprising a member selected from the group consisting of potassium phosphate, sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, ammonium hydroxide, sodium carbonate, ammonium carbonate, potassium carbonate, TRIS and triethanolamine is a rinse, paste or gel.

Claim 63. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 36 wherein the composition including a member selected from the group consisting of potassium phosphate, sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, ammonium hydroxide, sodium carbonate, ammonium carbonate, potassium carbonate, TRIS and triethanolamine is a rinse, paste or gel.

Claims 64-81 (Canceled).